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LETTER DATED 11 MARCH 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Croatian Government welcomes the Report of a Preliminary Site Exploration of a Mass Grave Near Vukovar, Former Yugoslavia by Physicians for Human Rights, dated 19 January 1993, and enclosed as annex II to your letter to the President of the Security Council dated 9 February 1993 (S/25274) - with reservation already expressed in my letter of 16 February 1993 (S/25301).

In reference to chapter V of the report (pp. 34, 35 and 36), I wish to emphasize that the Republic of Croatia fully endorses Security Council resolution 808 (1993) and the establishment of an international tribunal for the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991. At the same time, my Government will strongly welcome immediate international action under the auspices of the Commission of Experts or any other body designated by the Security Council or the Secretary-General in accordance with Security Council resolutions 771 (1992) and 780 (1992). The Republic of Croatia is ready to join in the efforts of the Commission of Experts or another designated body in order to reveal the real and indisputable truth of the circumstances in which the people buried in the mass graves in the location "Ovcara" have lost their lives.

We accept the proposal set forth in the report that - after the on-site excavation and the transportation of the bodies to a secure place has occurred - the medico-legal examination be undertaken in the 212 US Mash Unit at Zagreb Airport. The University of Zagreb School of Medicine will provide all the necessary assistance for these efforts, but is unable to assure the appropriate location and does not have adequate means at its disposal to handle the probable number of victims. Some additional medical equipment would have to be acquired to facilitate the examinations.

Since possible future criminal action against the perpetrators can be foreseen, all the examinations undertaken by the Commission of Experts or another designated body would have to be done according to the provisions set forth in the Criminal Procedure Act and other relevant laws and regulations of the Republic of Croatia, and in the presence of the relevant Croatian authorities.

Due to the reverence for the innocent victims and the highly sensitive public opinion in Croatia, my Government would not be able to consent at this time to transporting the remains for examination outside the borders of the Republic of Croatia.

At the same time, I would like to reiterate the previously expressed concerns of my Government for the inadequate attention given to other mass grave locations in Croatia, since an official investigation has been instigated only for the location at "Ovcara". The full protection of the sites has been requested for the locations in the surroundings of Vukovar, Lovas, Tovarnik, Jakobovac, Petrovci, Ernestinovo, Tordinci, Dalj, Berak and Bogdanovci; immediate on-site investigation has been requested for the locations in Saborsko (United Nations protected area (UNPA) South), Banija (UNPA North); consideration of the documentation has been requested in connection with massacres in Nadin and Skabrnja (UNPA South). Little or nothing has been done so far, and we would like to see the necessary steps taken in order to provide for the protection of the sites and the beginning of the investigatory process.

I would ask for your kind assistance in distributing this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ambassador Dr. Mario NOBILO  
Permanent Representative

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